Telecommunication Union (ITU), are available and after the finalization of the national spectrum policy.

Committee on Information, Communication and Entertainment

1226. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any Committee on Information, Communication and Entertainment to help players in these sectors grow to their full potential;

(b) if so, the composition thereof;

(c) whether the Committee has submitted its report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) A Committee on Information, Communication and Entertainment (ICE) was set up, *inter-alia,* to identify new opportunities in the areas of Information, Communication and Entertainment where the State needs to play a pro-active role.

(b) The composition of the Committee is as under:

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister - Chairperson

Member Secretary, Planning Commission

Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Secretary, Department of Telecommunications

Secretary, Department of Information Technology

Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs

Secretary, Department of Commerce

Media Advisor to the Prime Minister.

(c) and (d) The Committee has prepared a draft report on the subject.

Facilities for village postmen

†1227. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that village postmen are provided the facilities of salary, allowance, LTC and pension;

(b) if not, the reasons for denial of these common facilities despite serving in remote areas in such hard conditions;

(c) by when the facilities like salary, allowance and pension etc. would be allowed to them like other postal employees;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether it is a fact that for months together they have not been getting any salary; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) In villages, the delivery of mail is effected by Departmental postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks. Departmental postmen effecting delivery of mail in villages are given salary, LTC, pension and other allowances due and admissible to Central Government employees. Gramin Dak Sevaks effecting delivery of mail in villages are being paid Time Related Continuity Allowance every month. Gramin Dak Sevaks are not eligible for LTC and pension.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Gramin Dak Sevaks are not regular Government servants. Therefore, facilities like LTC, pension and other allowances due and admissible to other regular Departmental employees cannot be extended to them.

(d) No, Sir. Departmental postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks effecting delivery of mail in villages are paid salary and Time Related Continuity Allowance respectively every month.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

Procurement of GSM handsets by BSNL

1228. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to issue a fresh tender for the procurement of GSM handsets by BSNL;

(b) if so, the reasons for the disposal of existing tender;

(c) the amount of loss incurred and loss of consumer base to BSNL in terms of delay in procuring the GSM handsets; and

(d) the reasons for the delay in procuring the handsets despite the completion of tendering process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Sir, BSNL as a policy does not provide GSM handsets to its subscribers and does not procure the same. However, present tender of 45.5M GSM lines of BSNL is operational and an Advance Purchase Order (APO) has been issued to successful bidder.

(c) The equipment procurement efforts for BSNL's new mobile network expansion project received a setback with one of the bidder approaching the Hon'ble High Court against the decision of BSNL rejecting his bid. BSNL's loss is merely on account of opportunity lost.